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SUBJECT: NEPAL - STATEMENT TO THE COUNCIL ON UNMIN RENEWAL

¶1. The Department requests USUN to draw on the points in paragraph 2 during the January 18 debate on the renewal of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN).

¶2. Begin Points.

-- Mr. President, the United States is pleased to support the six-month extension of UNMIN's mandate so that it can continue its efforts to help create a free and fair atmosphere for the election of a constituent assembly and the entire peace process. In extending this mandate, we are particularly pleased to be able to respond positively to the Nepalese government's request that UNMIN,s work continue. We are agreed that these efforts are vital in helping the Nepalese people to establish democracy, stability, and prosperity, and to reinforce stability throughout the region.

-- As noted in this resolution, the December 23 agreement between Nepal's political parties and their decision to reschedule elections for April 10 were welcome positive steps to put the peace process back on track and give hope to the people of Nepal that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement can be implemented. We pledge our full support to UNMIN and UN staff in fulfilling their mandate to facilitate the elections and the peace process. We ask Council members, UNMIN contributor countries, and other governments in the region to join us in maintaining this international commitment to the people of Nepal.

-- The United States commends the work of Special Representative Martin and his staff and looks forward to working with him under a renewed mandate. We congratulate SRSG Martin on UNMIN's success in completing the verification of the designated cantonments, and urge them to maintain their focus on the remaining tasks within UNMIN,s mandate.

-- The United States urges both the Six Party alliance and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to continue to settle their differences through peaceful dialogue and to live up to their commitments outlined in the Peace Agreement and other peace accords

-- The United States also strongly encourages the Government to address to the extent possible the concerns of historically disadvantaged groups, including in the Terai, so that all parties and groups that are committed to a new, democratic Nepal will participate in the upcoming elections.

--The U.S. is providing nearly \$10 million annually in assistance in support of Nepal's transition to democracy in areas such as security sector reform, conflict resolution, civil society, supporting legal institutions, the election commission and political parties. We urge other donors to offer maximum support to ensure that Nepal makes a successful transition.

-- We look forward to the continuing reports of the Secretary General, and pledge to remain engaged in helping to ensure

that UNMIN successfully carries out its mandate.

End Points.

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